CHAPTER II

THE ECOLOGY AND ECONOMY OF THE AL-QASR AREA

Changing Patterns of Land Use

131 Al-Qasr is located in the Northwestern Coastal Zone, a relatively fertile littoral region forming the northern edge of the Egyptian Western Desert. Extending from Alexandria to Sallum on the Libyan border, the Zone is some 500 kilometers in length and reaches south into the desert some 20 to 50 134 kilometers. A deep soil deposit and a relatively high average 132 rainfall of about 15 centimeters (20 centimeters of rain would 241 be considered "high") permit limited agriculture in this region.

133 Due to the drainage pattern of the coastal area there is a fair supply of underground water. The rain percolates [172] down through coastal sand dunes and is trapped in man-made •312 underground galleries dating from Roman times. Farther into the desert, cisterns, which also date from Roman times, catch the rains draining off the Libyan plateau to the south. This plateau and the catchment area form the southern boundary of the greater al-Qasr settlement area (see Figure 4). The General Desert Development Authority, an agency of the government, estimates that there are about 3,000 of these

312 cisterns spread throughout the Western Desert. Many of them are still used by the Bedouins for watering their livestock. The southernmost part of the catchment area provides grazing for sheep. Northward near the coast, where the soil deposit permits, barley is cultivated.

311 823 [103] The Bedouins divide al-Qasr into "the good life" (ma'isha simha) on the coast, and "the bad life" (ma'isha wihsha) in the desert. Ma'isha simha consists of two zones: the shatt or sahil (i.e. "the coast," "as far as one can still see the sea"), and the area of shair wi mar'a ("the barley and pasture area"). Ma'isha wihsha is the zone beyond the plateau where nothing grows, the daf'a or sibta ("uncultivable land which is sandy and stoney"). All of the Bedouins of al-Qasr are settled permanently either on the coast or just south in the barley and pasture area. Nomadic and semi-nomadic activity disappeared generations ago in this part of the desert.

361

823 103 131 When the Bedouins speak of al-Qasr, they are referring to an area which is traditionally defined. When the Egyptians speak of al-Qasr, they are referring to a "village" only recently incorporated. The difference is a substantial one and not merely a difference in dialect. The Bedouins use the term mintaqit al-Qasr ("the area, or territory, of al-Qasr"): the Egyptians say qaryit al-Qasr ("the village of al-Qasr").

000 As the Bedouins view it, the Western Desert is the watan

173 land along the coast: "This land was free, and the man who
[36] planted on it owned it. We call this (method of claiming land)
[425] wad'a-l-id ("laying on of the hand," i.e. seizure). There was
[423] plenty of freedom in those days. A man could farm or keep animals." Planting and caring for the land is not novel to the Bedouins of al-Qasr.

423 The Bedouins claim that the pattern of land distribution
425 established during the time of Abu Mahjuba prevails today.
656 Further, they say that these rules will never change, no matter
[178] what laws come out of Cairo: "Land registration can mean nothing where the tribes are concerned, for no Bedouin would be willing to take the land of another Bedouin. The government forces us to register our land so that it can be stated in the newspaper that they are giving the Bedouins land."

*613 The relationship between ecology and lineage territory
423 is not striking, such as in the case of the Cyrenaican Bedouins
182 of Libya (Peters 1960). In most cases, lineage territories run on a north-south line cross-cutting the coastal garden and southern pastoral zones. Hence, lineage territories are, generally, ecologically similar rather than contrasted. However,
*613 there are exceptions. 'Ailit Shraif lineage (see Figure 3a
423 below), at the western end of al-Qasr's 'izba sector, settled
182 there "because of the abundance of underground water in this
241 area: the ground is rocky here and the water comes out fresh
•[312] like the Nile." Their founder, Sayyid Shraif, "specialized"
[361]

*613 423 182 241 in farming, and he found this land "good for raising mint and vegetables." To the southeast of the 'izba, the lineages of Lazumi and Ma'fas found the land suitable for barley and
• [312] grazing. This area is rain-fed. There are no wells and so vegetable crops are not possible here. The members of these lineages say that their ancestors were "real" Bedouins in Cyrenaica, and did not wish to become farmers in Egypt. It
*613 182 184 241 is interesting to note that the Lazumi and Ma'fas are the richest lineages in all of al-Qasr. They were, perhaps, better able to maintain the traditional style of life which all of the Bedouins claim is "the best." But all Bedouins of al-Qasr depend to some degree upon horticulture or arboriculture.
[231] And most families own a few sheep or goats. Both Lazumi and Ma'fas garden in their coastal sections, and Shraif members own sheep.

656 423 Land registration has a history in the Western Desert. The government attempted it a number of times, but with little success until 1959 when the General Desert Development Organization (GDDO) undertook its program of land reclamation. But the
361 342 178 Bedouins were settled long before this. In al-Qasr, the Bedouins began to erect permanent stone dwellings on the land about the time of the First World War. In the Matruh area, elder informants agree that before 1914 the Bedouins lived in tents outside the
361 648 town area. When the British came, they began to move into town. Many of the Bedouins built houses in Matruh between the years

654 1960, were olive tree owners. One individual, who owned 400
245 trees before the reclamation program, now owns 1,400 trees.
177 His increase has not all been at government expense, but a large share of it has been. Of the 9,514 trees planted by the government, 4,666 of them have been planted in the barley and wadi area to the south; 4,848 in the garden area on the coast. In the southern sector, a Bedouin who owns at
• [312] least ten acres of land may have the government drill a well and erect a windmill pump on his property. For this, he pays
[452] 350 Egyptian pounds (approximately $1,000.00) over a thirty-year period. The Bedouin is willing to undertake this contract, and also to take land out of barley production, because he sees the future security of the olive market. Because of this, also, he is willing to agree on land boundaries and to register his land with the government.

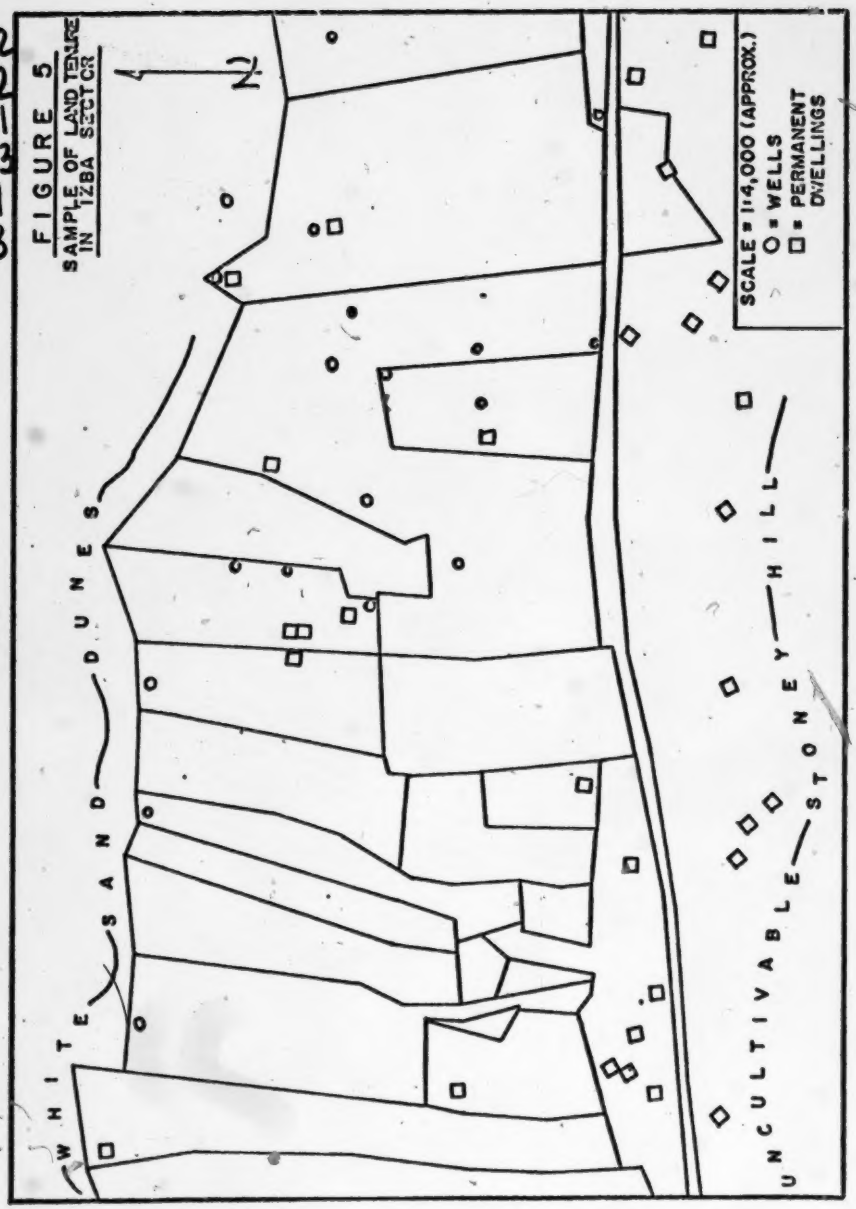
657 Economic transition would not be possible, nor could the Bedouins afford to hazard it, were it not for government welfare payments in the form of staple products. These rations stabilize the mixed economy of the al-Qasr while promoting a shift to a fuller dependence on agriculture. Of the thirteen
657 cooperative societies in the Matruh area, al-Qasr is the
474 largest and has been designated as a pilot project for the whole Western Desert. Al-Qasr garners the largest share of government aid, and, consequently, is heavily dependent upon it. The table below shows the amount of aid given monthly to

244 all times of the day in the desert. The Bedouins had most of these crops before the government came to al-Qasr. Since [177] 1960, however, the Bedouins have been planting new crops such as okra, squash, cucumber, tomato, spinach and melon. All of these are plants adopted from the Nile Valley. Vegetables 244 •312 are grown by means of irrigation or dry-farming. Where there is no well water, an individual will cultivate without irrigation. In this case, crops are planted in the spring after the rains. This method is called ba'ali. Irrigation makes it possible for a man to obtain four crops during the year, but usually, the Bedouin is more concerned with security than with profit. Therefore, most Bedouins try for one good crop 244 and allow a portion of the land to remain fallow. Land which has been planted all year around needs at least one year's rest before it can be replanted. The vegetable harvest usually takes place in July or August.

241 The government has attempted to introduce other crops 177 into al-Qasr which have failed. Failure is related to two 312 main problems in al-Qasr: salination arising from the short supply of fresh water, and the Bedouin's misunderstanding of the techniques of successful irrigation farming. Figs have 245 not been successful in al-Qasr due to the nature of the soil 177 itself. The almond tree has succumbed to the climate of al- [132] Qasr. This tree blooms in April during the khamsin season, fifty days of hot, dry winds blowing in from the Sahara. The

1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
'Aishaibat

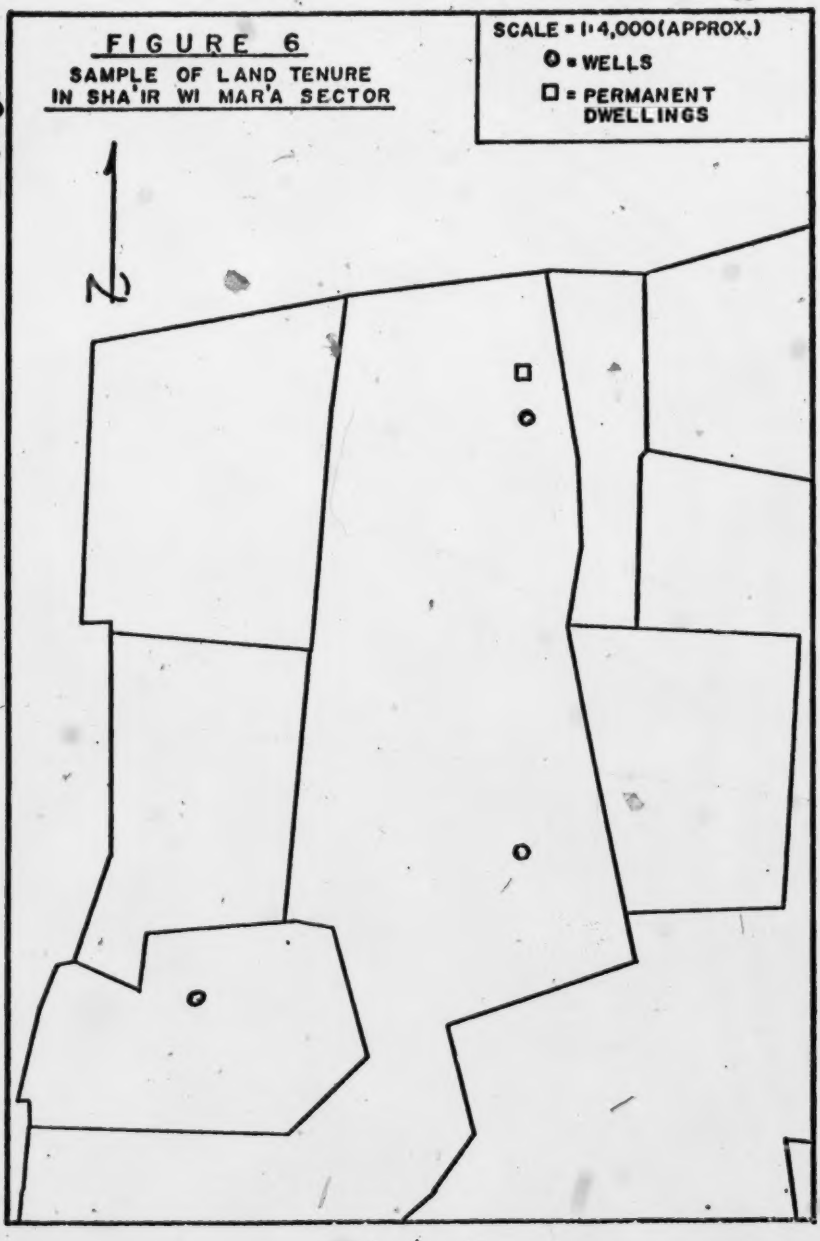
102
•312
361
423
311
133



1: Obermeyer E-5 (1964-1965) 1969 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
'Aishaibat

102
423
312
361

FIGURE 6
SAMPLE OF LAND TENURE
IN SHA'IR WI MAR'A SECTOR



156 of them) cater largely to the needs of the lineage in whose
159 territory they are located. They are operated mostly on a
554 credit basis. Lineage members, as debtors, feel gratitude
443 but also, and more importantly, loyalty toward their kinsman
423 and creditor. Hajj 'Ali is the only member of al-Qasr who
472 owns two shops, and the only Bedouin in the whole Western Desert
* [613] who owns three shops. His brother owns a shop in Matruh.
[452]

156 Furthermore, the shop in Sallum is in a strategic position on
159 the Libyan border which, coincidentally or not, is a point
554 for importing, and also smuggling, foreign goods into Egypt.
443 The possession and utilization of foreign products is definitely
439 a status symbol all over Egypt. Hence, the person in this
472 area who can control, however slightly, the distribution of such goods has a lever with which to exact prestige and favors from the "status group" in al-Qasr who now welcome these symbols (tobacco, pistols, rifles, radios) and the bureaucrats of Marsa Matruh who crave them (food goods, clothing materials, car parts).

156 Besides all this, Hajj 'Ali is involved in a small
159 stone-cutting operation which supplies stones for house
554 building, he cooperates with his three brothers in a well-
[316] cleaning concern, and contracts government heavy equipment
• [312] to build earth dams. The material evidence of his status
[427] is that he is the only man in al-Qasr with two compound-type
[342] houses (one he built thirteen years ago), and the only man
[595] with four wives.

2: Mohsen E.O-5 (1958-1966) 1971 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Awlad Ali

CHAPTER II

ECOLOGY AND HISTORY

619 Awlad Ali are a number of Arabic-speaking semi-nomadic tribes of
101 sheep and goat herders who inhabit the northern part of the Western
162 Desert of Egypt. The total population of Awlad Ali, according to the 1965 preliminary census, was about 100,000 inhabitants. This estimate is, however, very tentative and fluctuates from one year to the next, depending on the circumstances of the pasture in the area. The
131 area they occupy consists of the narrow strip of fertile land which extends along the Mediterranean coast from near Alexandria in the east some 350 miles westward to the UAR-Libyan border town of Sallum, and varying in width from ten to thirty miles. Vegetation in the area de-
132 133 pends on rainfall, supplemented by a number of artesian wells. The rainy season extends from November to March, but the rain is extremely erratic in nature, varying from one year to another and from one place to the next. Draught has been experienced every three to four years, one of them being experienced at the time of the study. The water situ-
• 312 [181] ation is further aggravated by the low technological level of the people which prevents them from making the best use of the available rain water. There have been some attempts made to store as much of the rain water as possible, but these attempts are usually made by individuals and in too crude and primitive a way to prevent most of the water from being lost by seepage or by evaporation. The most commonly used method of water preservation in the area is digging cisterns in the ground. But most of these cisterns are too shallow to keep large amounts of water. Some deeper wells are found in the area and are called "beer sama"

312 [172] [653] (literally, sky-wells, to indicate that they are dug to receive and preserve rain water). Most of these are ancient Roman pools which were claimed either by the government or by individuals, and are put into use again to store rain water. Recently, the government has erected a number of dams to preserve the rain water in exceptionally good years from flowing into the sea. All this, however, is not enough to provide the tribal population in the area with a permanent supply of water because of the limited capacity of the cisterns and the pools and the scarcity of rain and its erratic nature. Recent attempts have been made to tap the underground water in some parts of the area. A large number of wells were sunk, especially along the coast.

433 221 The economy of Awlad Ali is based on livestock husbandry, supplemented by occasional cultivation of barley. Owing largely to the variation in the amount of rainfall, the sources of food in the area have the important characteristic that the place and amount of their occurrence vary from one year to the next. Throughout most of the area, the tribal populations are concerned predominantly with warding off shortages in the food supply by moving with their flocks to areas where grazing lands are available.

233 Awlad Ali keep a variety of domestic animals, the most important of which, from the economic point of view, are sheep and goats. The [433] [237] economy of Awlad Ali is based on the utilization of the products of these two animals. These products are milk, meat, wool, and hides. [262] [272] Milk and its products constitute the basic element of the people's diet. Milk is never consumed fresh. It is always made into sour milk 272 252 (maleh), kishk (dried milk), or butter.

423 311 619 can he do this, but he can also sell that right. The right to sell the share of the tribal land has recently become recognized in the Western Desert, and the usufruct right is being treated in the same way as ownership.

423 311 619 233 While the boundaries of the cultivable land belonging to the tribe are guarded, when it comes to grazing land, the boundaries are not so much enforced. The tribes of the Western Desert of Egypt are quite tolerant in allowing members of other tribal segments to graze their flocks wherever grazing lands are available. Everyone from any tribe can graze his flocks in areas that offer better pasture. But in doing so, he does not have the right to use the wells and cisterns of the tribal segment. [312] [432] Water is scarce and valuable. Cisterns are owned by the tribal segments, and if an outsider wants to use the water, he has to buy it from the owner for the whole season for a sum ranging between $100-$180.

423 656 In 1958, with the extension of the Mariut irrigation project, a Desert Land Possession Law was enacted and came into force in 1960. This law restates the right of the government to the ownership of the land, and therefore does not recognize the tribal possessions of the land, even when they have made certain improvements in it, such as planting trees or digging wells. However, it gave the right of the occupants of a certain area of land to request either the purchase of the land or its lease for a period not exceeding nine years, granted that such is made within one year of the passing of the law. Failing to do so within one year, the government will either remove the plants and buildings, or confiscate them without compensation.

423 656 The above law met with opposition from the tribal population in the area. As a result of this opposition, a new law was enacted in 1964 (Law #100). Although this later law eliminated some of the shortcomings of the previous one, it is not itself without disadvantages. The 1964 law recognizes the Bedouins' right of ownership only in areas where the fairly permanent trees were planted before 1958. Rain-fed areas cultivated from season to season are excluded. The new law also provides for the sale and transfer of land. Any person can purchase up to 50 feddans (acres) provided that he can develop it into an economic enterprise. The law also provides for the distribution of arable lands in such a way as to permit each head of household to own 10 feddans and to be provided with water possibilities. The price of this kind of land is to be paid over a period of 30 years. Settlers are encouraged and helped in planting trees and building dikes. So far, 8,600 feddans [312] irrigated by windmills have been possessed by members of Awlad Ali tribes, and titles to their holdings are being issued.

233 423 656 With regard to grazing lands, no legislation has yet been issued, and the government feels that at this stage of development, it is essential to start educating and inducing the tribal population of the Western Desert in initiating and implementing new programs for preventing overgrazing and controlling the number of flocks.

The Group

619 The name Awlad Ali covers a number of ethnically distinct groups. In addition to Awlad Ali proper (the descendents of Ali), referred to as the Sa'adi, it includes a number of Murabiteen (holy men) tribes who are attached to various segments of Awlad Ali and occupy an inferior political position. The name also includes various peasant

682 and unjustifiable homicide. To examine responsibility in homicide
672 among Awlad Ali and their definition of "intentional" and "non-
673 intentional" killing, let us first present some of the cases collected from the area.

CASE #1: The Case of the Broken Rope

682
672
312
[184]
[428]

This is one of the classical cases which is told throughout the entire area. There is some slight variation in the way it is told, but all accounts refer to the fact that Hemeida from the 'Esheibat tribe inherited the right to use a large area of tribal land in which there was an old Roman well not used for a long period of time and which was full of sand. One day he invited the awaqil of his tribal segment, as well as his neighbors, to consult them on how to clear the well, since without it the land was almost useless. They all decided it was a good idea and offered their help. On the day the well was to be cleared, they all gathered around the well. Among those present was Do'ah, a poor member of the 'Esheibat tribe who worked as a paid shepherd for Hemeida. He was watching from a distance when Hemeida called upon him to give a hand. The well, like all Roman wells in the area, is about fifty feet deep and fifteen feet in diameter, and narrows as one goes down the well. To be cleared, someone has to be lowered by a rope to the bottom of the well to dig up the sand. Hemeida's cousin, Ali, agreed to go down, and the gathering looked for a sturdy rope which they found at one of Hemeida's neighbors. As the group was tying Ali to the rope, Hemeida suggested that Ali was too heavy for the rope and that it would be a good idea if a slimmer man did the job. At this point, everybody looked at Do'ah, since he was the thinnest

682 person in the crowd. So, Do'ah volunteered to be lowered down
672 to clear the well. He then proceeded to the well, glanced at the
• 312 bottom of it, and threw a small stone to see if there was any water left in it. The stone made a faint splash indicating that there were a few inches of water. After that, he examined the rope and the equipment used. Satisfied with everything, he tied the rope around himself and was lowered very slowly and carefully by the crowd at the top of the well. As Do'ah was more than half-way down, the rope broke, and he fell. When the crowd called him, Do'ah answered in a faint voice telling them that he was hurt but that he would be all right. The crowd then looked for a spare rope to lower somebody to get Do'ah but could not find any in a nearby camp. They sent a man to get a rope from the next camp, but by the time a man was lowered to get Do'ah, he was dead; he had drowned in six inches of water.

682 Since the place of the accident was close to the police sta-
672 tion, word got to the officer who, after investigating the case,
[625] ruled it as accidental death. But while the government authorities
[613] were investigating the case, members of the Bait to which Do'ah belonged were proceeding with the customary ways of Awlad Ali to claim bloodmoney for their dead kinsman. The idea was that a life had been lost, and that regardless of the police investigation, someone must pay for it. The question was who. Since the well belonged to Hemeida, Do'ah's relatives insisted that he was the one to pay the bloodmoney. Not denying the fact that someone had to pay for the death of Do'ah, Hemeida insisted that the one to pay was the

613 the tent and fearing that he might have been a member of the
628 feuding Bait intending to harm him or members of his family,
Galil took his gun and went outside to see who was there. He
called on the person to identify himself. When he got no answer,
he warned him that unless he identify himself, he (Galil) would
fire his gun in the air as a warning. After a short period of no
613 response, Galil fired his gun in the air. A moment later, Galil
628 heard a cry coming from the direction of a small hill at the side
682 of the tent. When Galil went there, he found Salem, a member of
a neighboring camp, lying on the ground with a bullet wound in his
stomach. He told Galil that his wife was sick and that he had
come to borrow Galil's donkey to take her to the doctor in the
nearby medical center. He had taken the short cut to Galil's tent
when he was hit by the bullet which Galil had fired in the air.
Galil took his wounded neighbor to the medical center, but Salem
died before they reached it.

682 The Mi'ad was held, and Galil and his family had to pay L.E. 400
672 to the victim's kin group. The amount was that specified for in-
627 tentional killing, since the wound that caused the death was in-
673 flicted by a lethal weapon.

CASE #5: The Case of the Startled Shepherd

233 This case involves Idris, a poor member of the Sheresat tribal
[464] segment. He earned his living by working as a hired shepherd for
[619] 'Awwad from Bait Ibrahim in the area of Gharbaniat. During the dry
[312] season, each shepherd takes his flocks to the water wells near the
coast and leaves them there for three or four hours to get their
fill of drinking water. That afternoon, Idris, waiting for the

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

slaves, kitchens, and wells. The oasis depression was studded with date palms and just outside the main entrance to the village were small irrigated gardens and wind-mills. The people had to use the brackish water for ordinary purposes, but sufficient fresh water for tea was obtained from infrequent showers by hollowing out cisterns in the rocks at the top of the western escarpment of the oasis.

The Grand Sanusi was not only a very learned man and a writer of distinction but also a bibliophile with a fine library of some 8,000 volumes,[1] mostly works on Islamic law and jurisprudence, mysticism, philosophy, history, koranic exegesis, poetry, and astronomy and astrology. Round him were many men capable of making good use of this substantial library. Indeed, it would have been difficult to have found anywhere in the Islamic world at that time, outside Cairo, a circle of better scholars. Poetry was one of the arts most cultivated at the oasis and I have been told by Arabs that it reached a high level of excellence. Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman, himself a poet, wrote that at Jaghbub one meets 'literary men of distinction, whose writings eclipse those of the poets of Iraq and of Andalousia'.[2]

The whole community at Jaghbub may have numbered round about 1,000, but it is not possible to make more than a guess at the figure. As the oasis produces little except dates, the supply problem must have been considerable, and we know that the Grand Sanusi kept herds of camels to the west of the oasis, where there is scrub grazing, and at al-'Azziyyat, to transport supplies from the coast. The community lived very largely on the surplus revenues, mostly goods in kind, sent annually by all the zawiyas of Cyrenaica.

The community was centred round the University. It was, in fact, almost purely a University society, and its importance as such in the history of the Sanusiya Order is very considerable. Here, under his personal supervision and the supervision of his disciples, far from worldly distractions, the Grand Sanusi was able to train the future leaders of the Order. The Shaikhs of the lodges of the Order were appointed by him from among his intimate circle of disciples, many of whom had followed him

[1] Duveyrier, op. cit., p. 24; Muhammad bin 'Uthman, op. cit., p. 88; Sir Richard Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Meccah* (Memorial Edition), 1893, vol. ii, pp. 24–5.

[2] Op. cit., p. 88.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

the steep sides of which make east–west journeys slow and arduous. To the west this broken country levels down, and in a bay in the hills lies the extensive treeless, but very fertile, basin of al-Marj, known to Europeans as the Barce Plain. It was colonized in classical times and again recently by the Italians. The Arabs call this first terrace *lusaita* (*al-wasaita*), the middle part, because it lies between the coastal plain and the plateau tableland formed by *al-zahir*, the second terrace. This tableland is famous for its Graeco-Roman ruins and is dotted also with the deserted farms of Italian colonists. It mounts to a narrow third terrace, at about 875 metres above sea level, from the top of which one can look down on these settlements.

The plateau slopes southwards through a juniper belt. There forest ends and it continues to roll to the southern steppe in stony undulations dissected by many wadis. In the plain at its foot there is plenty of grass and low scrub, and vegetation is thick in depressions, but the country becomes increasingly desolate the farther to the south one journeys towards the lifeless wastes of the Sahara. The eastern part of Cyrenaica is more arid than the west or centre. The Marmarica, the *batnan* of the Arabs, is characterized by low hills rising from the coastal belt and prolonged towards the south to create a succession of crests of several kilometres in depth. The mean annual rainfall is low and wells are restricted to the coastal belt. However, there is, probably in most years, a certain amount of grazing to some fifty miles from the coast during the rains. The Sirtica, the extension of Cyrenaica to the west, is a vast rolling treeless plain traversed by a series of wadis running north–south which in their spread provide most of the summer grazing. Wells are found only near the coast but pasturage is plentiful till the Wadi al-Farigh is reached.

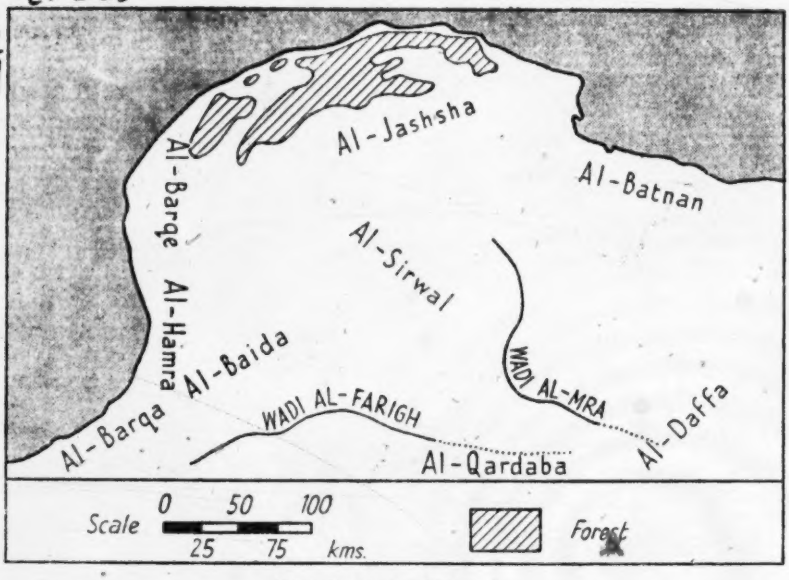
The rainfall very exactly determines the vegetation belts and thereby limits human distribution and imposes a certain way of life. The amount of precipitation depends on a number of circumstances. Mean annual rainfall decreases from west to east. Altitude also affects it. More significant, however, are the variation with latitude, the seasonal rhythm, and annual irregularities. The accompanying map shows how rainfall decreases rapidly from the coast, how only the very limited plateau area is subject to heavy precipitations (400–550 mms.),

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 33]

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

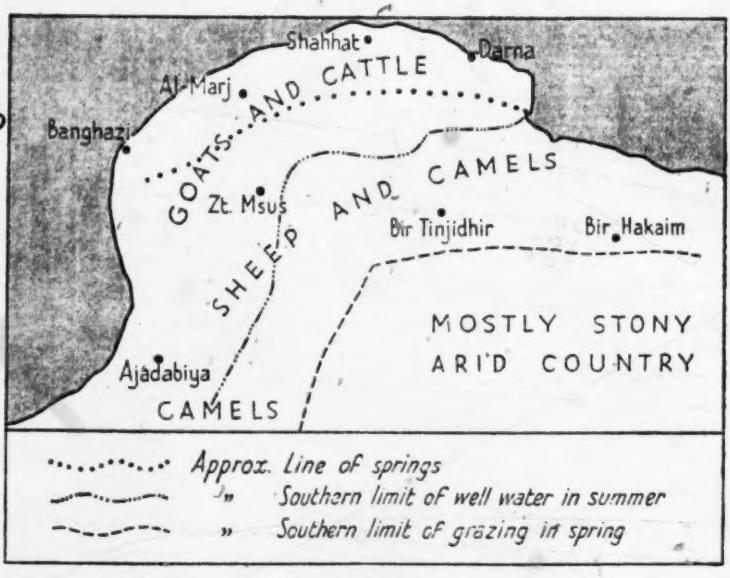
[P. 32]

102
137



Distribution of Forest.

102
312
233



Pastoral Zones.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

and the insufficiency of the fall elsewhere. It follows that only on the plateau can there be forest, and only there is a settled and purely agricultural way of life possible; and it was there and on the coastal fringe that in ancient and modern times European colonists settled.

The rains in Cyrenaica fall only in winter, from October to April. In the absence of irrigation the planting season is thus clearly delimited. So is the grazing season to the south of the plateau, for in summer the grasses wither and the wells dry up, compelling shepherds to drive their flocks northwards to the plateau, thus producing the kind of seasonal nomadism known as transhumance. The variation in total rainfall from year to year and the distribution of its fall over the winter months are of the utmost importance for agriculturalists in Cyrenaica. There is still some obscurity, but it is an observed fact that every few years in Cyrenaica there is a year in which the fall of rain is insufficient, or too badly distributed, to raise an adequate crop. In a mixed economy this fact must have given an overwhelming bias towards pastoralism.

The water supplies of the plateau, which depend entirely on rainfall, are sufficient for the needs of the Bedouin and their flocks. The clayey soils are, however, very exacting and running spring water is rare, being for the most part restricted to the triangle Darna–Slanta–al-Haniya. On the western part of the plateau water is conserved in cisterns and wells and on the maritime and *barqa* plains, in the Sirtica and Marmarica, and generally to the south of the plateau, in wells.

The distribution of vegetation in Cyrenaica follows variation in degree of precipitation. Where there is much rain there is forest. Where there is little rain there is steppe. Where there is no rain there is desert. The forest is thick but mainly squat and of very limited extension. An Italian estimate[1] of its distribution is shown on the accompanying map. It is predominantly Mediterranean in type, the juniper and the lentisk being the two commonest trees of the country. Forest ceases a few miles to the south of the high watershed of the plateau and gives way to steppe. The well-known route Tariq 'Aziza is generally regarded as the dividing line between the two kinds

[1] Dott. Giovanni Manzoni, 'Memorie sui boschi della Cirenaica', *Notiziario Economico della Cirenaica*, 1929.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

them to live on the country to a great extent. In normal times the Bedouin drive their animals on the hoof to Egyptian markets, slowly, along this rich southern pasture belt, grazing as they go, so that they arrive in good condition. Finally, there can be no doubt about the correctness of the Arab claim that a few weeks residence in the open steppe is a tonic for man and beast.

It must be remembered that there are no water problems at this time of year. Sheep, goats, and camels do not have to be watered from the time the first rains make grass till the end of April or early in May: even horses do not drink until well into April. This fact is important, because it means that the prolific pastures can be grazed by all without dispute, since the wells, which belong to tribal sections or families, are not drawn on. While rain is still falling regularly human requirements are met from pools. To the south of the Tariq 'Aziza, generally speaking, there is no ownership in land—there are no *hudud*, boundaries, as the Arabs say—and anyone may cultivate or graze where he pleases, but there is strict ownership in wells; whereas to the north of the Tariq 'Aziza there is less narrowly restricted ownership in water, which is here spring water in abundance, but there are well-defined rights in arable.[1] The water of the southern wells is essential for the Bedouin who own the country and who live in it all the year round, and their rights are respected by those who graze there. Sheep and goats need only drink every second or third day, even in the hottest weather, so that in the period of meagre pasturage they have a wide range of grazing from the wells, and the dry grasses, supplemented by evergreen shrubs of the goosefoot family, are sufficient nourishment for them. Wells are numerous in the steppe but few of them last out the summer.

The animals grazed in the southern steppe are mostly sheep and camels. The Bedouin say 'Cattle and goats do not migrate; camels and sheep do'. Camels are essential to nomadic life as it is impossible to move camp without them, and the richer Bedouin are in camels the more frequently they move, seeking richer pastures. Cyrenaican dromedaries are heavy beasts,

[1] Enzo Savarese, *Le Terre della Cirenaica*, Pt. II, 1928, Chap. VII; Massimo Colucci, *Il Regime della Proprietà Fondiaria nell' Africa Italiana*, vol. i, 1942, pp. 210 seq. and 220 seq.

weeks later, he is reviled for demanding a long overdue instalment of his daughter's bride-wealth. He is the person who can be approached freely, to whom love tales can be told, from whom help can be expected, who gives support in disputes, and who also upbraids, who punishes, who withholds, who acts as a pull-away from the agnatic group. An agnate demands help, and also compels the fulfilment of obligations. An agnate is a man with whom relationships are formal, particularly if he is a senior. He is, too, the person who unfailingly, though perhaps grudgingly, gives help when it is most required; who, regardless of the merits of the case, defends one against external opposition; and who is always available at each life crisis. A kinship link is not to be defined by any one particular mode of behaviour. Each is a cluster of different sorts of behaviour, one form taking precedence in these circumstances, another in other circumstances, and so forth.

The little clusters of kindred can be defined clearly in any of the camps. It is customary among the Bedouin for those who are most closely linked as kindred to pitch their tents close to each other. For example, if a man has two recently married sons, their tents are pitched on either side of his, with the ropes of their tents crossing the ropes of their father's tent. More distantly related kin will be more distantly placed, and here and there, breaks in the continuity of the lines of tents are to be observed, corresponding as a rule to breaks in kinship. Each large camp in this way can be viewed as two or more nuclei of kindred. The camp as a whole is dominantly composed of agnates, but they are disposed in such a way as to show clusterings of varying kinship composition. Characteristically each cluster has a separate name, often a female name which refers to a common mother of the cluster, or of the head of the leading family in it. When these relatively large camps break up with the onset of the rains and disperse to form small camps of five to seven tents for winter pasturing, they will be seen to correspond almost identically with the kin clusters of the larger summer camp. Again, a tertiary segment may have two wells for its own use. In a particular year there may be sufficient water in one of them to meet the needs of the whole group, and its members then live together in one camp; the following year both wells may have to be used, and the camp of the previous summer will split up, roughly half going

4: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1970 - MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

613 621 602 [312] to one well, and the remainder to the other. It is usually an easy matter to predict, at least in a general fashion, how the group will divide, as long as the details of kinship are known; the camps will be composed of members of two sets of patri-lines in the tertiary segment, who will also represent two discrete clusters of cognatic kindred. If, therefore, a tertiary group increases in numbers to the point where a split in the lineage is inevitable, here then is the line of split, along a line, that is, of kinship cleavage and lineage differentiation. 'Men make the tribe; women divide it,' is an oft-quoted saying among the Bedouin, but this, like most sayings, tells only part of the truth, as we shall see.

613 621 It is possible to show where on the genealogy change takes place, and it is possible to indicate the lines cleavages will follow, but the proliferation of a lineage does not occur merely because the possibility exists for it to do so. A group must, clearly, break up if the number of its members significantly exceeds that which can be supported by the available natural resources; water is the prime cause of the proliferation of lineages. Granting this, a group remains an undifferentiated corporation until occasion arises when its members, or some of them, can demonstrate unequivocally that they are no longer bound by its conditions of membership. There is a number of occasions when this can be done, some of which are discussed below.

613 621 672 682 The test, *par excellence,* of corporate affiliation is the acceptance of the responsibility to pay blood-money. Refusal to accept this is the same as renouncing membership of the group. Individuals are sometimes excluded from membership in this way. There are occasions too, when the payment of blood-money involves renunciation by more than one or two individuals. If membership of a section has increased to the point of splitting, and should a homicide occur within it, one of the kin clusters within the group might demand blood-money from the other. Nothing could make the statement of split clearer than this. The most impelling condition of membership of the tertiary group is that 'we pay as one and receive as one', a condition which, of course, excludes payment within the group. Any two groups between which the demand for blood-money has been made are, therefore, by definition, separate tertiary groups.

613 621 965 When a member of a group or his wife dies, there are specific

6: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1965 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

sorts of petty ways, listen to his grumbles about his agnates, interfere on his behalf in petty camp quarrels, shield him from the disciplinarian father and guard his property interests against the predatory father's brother; if the mother's brother dies without heirs, the sister's son can reasonably expect at least a share of his wealth. When the mother's brother is a member of a different corporate group, a sister's son cannot possibly expect to inherit from him in any circumstance.

The mother's brother may reside in a camp too distant to be much effective direct help in day-to-day living. His relative remoteness gives the relationship other possible opportunities, however. Rainfall in the semi-desert area of Cyrenaica is highly variable, both from year to year, and from place to place in any given year. As a result this shallow saucer of a depression may have sufficient rain to supply both the water needs of animals and crops, while an area a few miles distant will have inadequate water supplies for either. The mother's brother-sister's son link can mean water for animals and a crop of barley for both when, in successive years, the resources of one area or the other are inadequate.

The differences in the relations between men and their mother's brother do not end with a characterisation of their antipodal forms. The demographic structure of a group may be such that one man may have a number of mother's brothers, another only one; one man may have to share with several brothers, another may be an only son. Complications of this sort determine the precise relationships between men, but however intricate these may be, each corporate group has its matrilateral links with a group occupying a slightly different ecological area, and it also has a plurality of matrilateral connections within it. Further, if a direct connection is not available to any particular individual he can use an indirect link (e.g. father's mother's brother or mother's mother's brother) to satisfy his needs.

The Preference for Males

Thus far, the family and the social matrix in which it is embedded has been discussed in general terms, most particularly in reference to several selected sets of relationships. I wish now to place these relationships in a more specific setting with a brief discussion of the composition of a small camp of a group inhabiting the arid areas of central Cyrenaica. When the Bedouin give their views on the structure of the family in Cyrenaica they speak of it as consisting of a pair of spouses and about ten children, mainly males. The emphasis on males is not mere sentiment, overwhelmingly though it favours them against females. Additional males in a family increase the productive possibilities of a family in the sense that more herdsmen become available and larger ploughing commitments can be undertaken; an increase in the number of females has small effect on production since they are precluded from any direct participation in these activities. Both sexes, ranging in age from about seven years to mature adulthood, are necessary if a family

829 is to constitute a viable economic unit; and if it is to expand, the number
594 of males must be increased disproportionately compared with females. Since
562 the structure of this "ideal family" (which in the sentiments of the Bedouin
858 is the only family) is based on the division of labour, some details of the tasks and their allocation among members of a family are included to estimate the importance of this notional "ideal family."

The Division of Labour, by Sex

462 The tasks women perform are almost entirely associated with the tent.
286 They make the tent top, and the gaily coloured carpets which cover the sandy ground in the men's quarters. They also weave the material for making sacks, and nose bags for horses and camels. Throughout the year a piece of weaving is always on the loom waiting, and while any women of the tent may take a turn at weaving, the mother decides what is to be made,
462 its pattern and colours and in general directs operations. Women also pitch
342 the tent when the camp is moved; they do so unaided by the men. It is a task which requires considerable strength and only grown girls and mature women can assist in this; younger girls scour the vicinity in search of stones to hold the sides of the tent on the ground after it has been erected.
[356] As soon as pitching is complete, the floor of the tent is brushed clean before carpets are spread and the few articles of personal belongings placed in their proper position.

462 Next, brushwood must be fetched in large quantities for fires. Apart
313 from cooking needs and winter warmth, the fire of each tent is in constant use for preparing the sickly sweet tea, almost the consistency of syrup, which is drunk several times a day regularly and which is made again for even the casual visitor. The task of fetching brushwood is performed daily, and each load takes a few hours of a woman's time to gather and bring back
[412] to the tent. Bushes are uprooted with the aid of a long-handled adze and piled together, to be carried on her back for the homeward journey. The load is cumbersome and heavy; only girls in their late teens and mature women can cope with it.

462 All cooking is done by the women. Most meals consist of cereal dishes of
252 various sorts, so that grinding, using heavy millstones, is a perpetual ac-
412 tivity to satisfy the demands for large quantities of flour. Millstones are bought in the villages. In most small camps there only one or two sets, so they are passed round from one woman to another. The stones are very heavy but when they are carried from tent to tent men offer no assistance.

462 Each tent also requires large quantities of water for human consumption.
• 312 If the camp is located near a well, water is drawn in small quantities, frequently. Young girls and boys take a donkey to the well, fill a couple of
[492] jerry cans with water, wait for an older sister to load them on the donkey and then drive the beast back to camp. After a fall of rain, while puddles of water remain on the ground, mature women make haste to gather the

surface water in jerry cans, bringing them back to the tents, one at a time, on their backs. Clothes are kept clean in the desert, and the women do the washing.

The care of children from birth until they are a few years old is the responsibility of the woman. Childbirth causes a minimum interruption in the daily sequence of a mother's activities. The child is breastfed if the mother has milk; if not, a wet nurse is sought or goat milk is substituted. Other than the time given to feeding it, the infant does not take up much of the mother's time. It is placed in a hammock slung between the centre poles of the tent and rocked by the mother as she passes to and fro. If nursing in illness is required, the mother devotes herself to it; her other tasks must then be performed by another woman.

As children acquire mobility, and at a time when, perhaps, the mother is pregnant again, they become so fractious one with the other that if help was unavailable the nervous strain could seriously disrupt the normal routine of work. During the early years of marriage, when daughters are still too young to look after their small brothers and sisters, the grandmother's help in child-rearing is invaluable. Too old for the arduous tasks of the daily routine, she may assist in teasing and spinning the raw wool, but it is in her role as nursemaid that she assumes importance. Children of both sexes are given the comfort of suckling at her breast, receiving attention and care for which the young mother could not possibly afford the time.

Caring for children takes up little of a man's time, and is mostly incidental. The woman, on the other hand, devotes relatively little of her time to the animals. She does the milking in spring — of camels, sheep and goats — but herding is not her responsibility, save for partly tending goats. Goats, when they are in the vicinity of the camp, are looked after by boys and girls of about eight to ten years of age. In springtime when they have dropped their young, or if some of them have to be retained in the camp at night for various reasons, the woman makes a brushwood enclosure at the side of the tent and sees the goats safely inside before nightfall.

A catalogue of the tasks for which women are responsible may not seem very impressive; the number of tasks is not excessive, but the persistence of the routine bends the backs of most women. Paradoxically, any suggestion that men should take over female tasks would strike them as absurd. Assistance from one of the same sex is always a welcome relief, but the abrogation of a particular task by men would be interpreted by women as the loss of a right. For, in the division of labour, it is not merely that tasks are allocated between the sexes for expedient reasons, or in consideration of the labour involved or because tasks which can be performed in the vicinity of the camp are left to women; division of labour would not make sense on these grounds, however strong they may be in Bedouin sentiments. Each task which falls to the lot of woman constitutes a right exclusive to her. Fetching firewood is not only a chore; it is a woman's prerogative. The insistence that only a woman can undertake certain tasks has nothing to do with her liking

7:Abou-Zeid E-5 (no date) 1959 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Egypt

105 livestock husbandry as their main occupation while the rest earn their living
162 by such other means as agriculture, fishing, stone-cutting, trade, etc. But whatever his main job may be, a man is likely to possess a number of sheep which he usually entrusts to a professional herdsman if he cannot look after them himself. This means that all sectors of the population have an active interest in livestock. Livestock, or rather sheep, are the most important and most esteemed item of wealth, and pastoral values still rank very high in spite of the obvious attraction of other types of work. On the other hand, pure nomadism is not practised, except perhaps by some small groups of camel-herders living in the far south of the area. The tremendous majority of the herdsmen are sheep-herders, whose movements are much more restricted than the movements of the real nomads. They have permanent settlements to which they retire when the grazing season is over, and there they practise agriculture, which they consider a secondary and supplementary occupation.

Most of the inhabitants of the Western Desert belong to the Awlad Ali clans who originally came from Libya. Some less important and less numerous clans, the Morabiteen clans, also live there as 'clients' of the more powerful Awlad Ali. A certain degree of correspondence exists between clan segmentation and the distribution of lands, both pasture-land and the fertile arable areas of the northern strip being distributed among clans and lineages in a clearly defined manner. A man cannot make use of the grazing ground, much less of the cultivation ground, known to belong to a different clan or lineage except under certain conditions and only obtaining the owners' permission. This does not mean, however, that clans and lineages are localized. For in spite of the natural tendency of kinsmen to cluster together and to live near to each other, the members of the same clan-segment may be widely dispersed, and the inhabitants of any specific locality, especially near the coast, usually belong to different clans. Nevertheless, a certain clan may be more strongly represented in a particular locality than all the other clans.

105 The problem of water supply is, naturally, the most crucial problem with
• 312 which the people have to cope. The absence of surface water, the shortness of the wet season, the low rainfall and the meagreness of the subterranean resources in most parts of the desert, especially inland, impose drastic limitations upon their activities. Apart from the few artesian wells found in the northern coastal zone, rain is the main source of water supply. It is, however, a very unreliable source because of its irregularity. Moreover, a considerable amount of rain-water is lost by seepage through the sand and by evaporation. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that not all the functioning wells yield potable water or even water suitable for the irrigation of fields. The water of a large number of these artesian wells is charged with a high percentage of dissolved salts. This water can only be used for domestic purposes. Certain experiments are now being carried out at Ras-el-Hikma and Fuka to see whether such saline water could be used for irrigating the pasture-lands.

105 The two main complementary occupations, i.e. livestock husbandry and
243 the cultivation of barley, are seriously affected by the water situation. The
311 strip of arable land which extends along the sea coast varies in breadth from place to place and from year to year according to the rainfall. In good years it may stretch some 10 to 20 kilometres southwards, but in bad years the cultivation becomes rather patchy and is confined to a very narrow strip only a few kilometres wide. The people are never sure of their crops, and in really

7. Abou-Zeid E-5 (no date) 1959 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Egypt

bad years the returns may be so poor that grain and flour have to be sent from the Delta to avert famine. The failure of the crop may also compel whole clan-segments to migrate with their animals to the Delta. In this respect, the semi-nomadic clans of the Western Desert represent a real burden on the national economy of Egypt.

Livestock husbandry, which is by far the most important and highly valued occupation, is itself subject to the variability and the erratic nature of rainfall, since it is the rain which determines the abundance of herbage and, consequently, the number of animals reared. Pasture land is found mainly to the south of the cultivated land. Sometimes, the fallow patches among the barley fields are also covered with grass and other pasture plants suitable for grazing. Pasture plants usually persist between December and May; during the summer, the land becomes arid hard desert with only few dispersed patches of dry grass. The grazing season *par excellence* is from November to April, during which period barley stands in the fields. After the first showers of November, barley is sown and the young men soon move with their flocks to the pastures, leaving the older people to look after the fields. As the dry season advances, the flocks are moved northwards to the cultivated lands so as to be nearer to fodder and to water-holes. Thus, the movements of the herders are rhythmic and regulated by the division of the year into two major seasons: the wet season and the dry season. The wet season is the period of plenty during which the animals are well fed; the dry season is the period of starvation for the flocks which must then rely on such fodder as barley straw and on the drying grass. Any movements of animals that may take place during that season are carried out on a very limited scale. In exceptionally bad years the people are compelled to dispose of their animals, or at least of a large part of the flocks, or they may send them away to their friends and relatives who may be living near vegetation. Sometimes, the herdsmen find themselves compelled to cross the frontiers to Cyrenaica for pasture.

We can see then from this brief account to what extent the water situation is responsible for determining the modes of living in the desert and for channelling human activities and imposing certain limitations on these activities. Development projects and sedentarization schemes planned for the Western Desert and its inhabitants must, therefore, give a great deal of importance to the question of water and its availability. In fact, most of the contemplated projects envisage the possibility of better exploitation of the existing water supplies as well as the tapping of potential resources.

Rightly or wrongly, it is generally assumed in Egypt that nomadism and semi-nomadism represent a phase of deterioration which is no longer compatible with the actualities of modern life and therefore should be abolished. For, apart from the fact that it is responsible for the hardships and insecurity suffered by the desert dwellers and the consequent ill effects on the national economy, especially in bad years, nomadism as practised in the Western Desert and under the prevailing circumstances is wasteful and destructive. Vast stretches of land which could be reclaimed at little cost and cultivated intensively are simply left for grazing without any serious endeavour to make better use of them. Under the contemplated sedentarization projects it is intended to increase the cultivated area, to improve the pastures by introducing new pasture plants of higher nutritive value in areas where agriculture is not

7:Abou-Zeid E-5 (no date) 1959 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Egypt

178 practicable, to tap unused resources, to develop the existing primitive crafts and to establish new industries. The question of water is the corner-stone of 312 all these projects. Subterranean water has been tapped from the ancient Roman 657 wells, and about 120 artesian wells have been sunk lately along the coast. A number of water cisterns have been constructed, and others are under construction, to preserve the rain-water for irrigation. Special attention has been paid in this regard to the western part of the coastal zone where the amount of rainfall exceeds that falling in the eastern parts. An example is the Wadi-el-Kharrouba cistern near Mersa Matrouh which will prevent large amounts of rain-water from being lost in the sands or in the sea, and store it for use during the dry season. All the water thus obtained will certainly help to extend the area sown with barley, especially in the El-Dab'aa zone; besides providing the more settled people with what they require to keep their fig trees and olive groves. The abundance of water may also encourage the introduction of new plants and trees which need a more stable and constant supply of water.

178 A few examples may serve to illustrate further the general policy adopted with regard to the problem of sedentarization of the Bedouin clans, and the 657 steps taken to put the policy into effect.

The first example we shall consider is the Wadi-el-Natrun project which concerns the exploitation of the natural resources of the area so as to allow the establishement of new industries and the extension of the cultivated area, which in turn may eventually encourage the people to change to agriculture or industry, i.e. to a sedentary life. The *wadi* is an extended depression which lies some 22 metres below sea-level. The south-eastern end of the depression is 80 kilometres from Cairo, while the northern end is about 85 kilometres from Alexandria. A number of shallow salt lakes cover about half its total area, and some of these lakes become dry during the summer. The *wadi* is known as a rich source of salt and natron (sodium carbonate). Also a certain reed called *halfa* grows there and is used by the inhabitants of the area for the making of rough mats. The depression has always been regarded as a grazing ground for sheep and goats, so that only 25 *feddans*[1] were cultivated in 1952. According to the project, the extraction of salt and soda was put under government supervision. Subterranean water was tapped in a number of places and by the end of 1957 more than one thousand *feddans* were brought under the plough. Serious efforts were also made to introduce the cultivation of fruit, olives and dates as well as vegetables. Much attention was also given to the question of improving the production of animals by introducing different methods of breeding, and encouraging the inhabitants of the area to change over to the improved breeds which are superior to the local animals. This was met at first with much reluctance and resistance, but there are signs that the people are beginning to appreciate the benefit of owning the improved breeds. A factory for the manufacture of carpets and rugs has also been established by the government. A considerable proportion of the raw wool required for the industry is obtained from local sources, and the relatively small production finds a ready market in the larger cities of the Delta. The point of particular interest for us here is that all the unskilled labour employed in this industry as well as in the extraction of salt and sodium is recruited from the local population. Those workers have become accustomed to a settled life, so that when the season of extraction is over and work is temporarily suspended they do

1. A *feddan* = 1 038 acres.

8: Kennett G-5 (ca. 1921) 1925 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9

of the present defendant seemed—for a really wealthy man—to be pointless and futile. The merchant anticipated this objection by hastening to add that the receipt of the actual cash did not interest him in the least; but that he had been wondering how he could shew his disapproval of the defendant's family in some way, and had gone carefully through all his old papers and receipts with this end in view, and had triumphantly discovered the bill of debt now produced in court.

Bedouin Law and custom sometimes accept right to bloodmoney in all sorts of circumstances, when other law would recognise no claim. For example, the principle is accepted that a life lost in prison must be paid for by the informers whose information resulted in the imprisonment of the deceased. It is entirely immaterial whether the information so given to the police was wilfully false or intentionally misleading, or whether it was merely subsequently found to be incorrect. Even if the information had been true and correct in every detail, the informer is still blood-guilty from the Ourfi standpoint, although in actual practice any such claims for bloodmoney would probably be considerably modified.

Other claims for bloodmoney are also recognised occasionally, in cases of obvious accidental death, or death by misadventure or Act of God, when the interpreters of Bedouin Law cannot get away from the main principle that a life lost must be paid for. The difficulty in these cases is to determine who shall pay for it; and the lawsuits usually end in a clever compromise, in which their essential principles are duly observed, but their judgments are mitigated and modified by leniency and commonsense. The following example, which occurred recently in Mariut, will illustrate this.

A certain Arab called Ali Abu Bukr had inherited from his father large cultivation rights in the desert; and in the middle of this land was an old cistern for the collection of rain water. It had not been used for years, and was silted

8: Kennett G-5 (ca. 1921) 1925 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9

671 up with drift sand; and as it was some miles from the
672 nearest permanent water supply, the owner of the cistern
682 decided that it was well worth clearing out, with a view to catching and conserving the next rainfall.

•312 Accordingly he summoned all his kinsfolk, and propounded his proposition, to which they agreed. Other Arabs occupying neighbouring rights suggested that it was a very good idea, probably with a view to a simplified water supply for themselves.

671 An Arab from the neighbouring tribe called Ahmed
672 had frequently acted as shepherd and odd-job man for
682 Ali; and it happened that, when Ali and all his kinsfolk were assembled at the cistern, Ahmed chanced to be passing. Ali hailed him, and asked him to come and lend a hand. So Ahmed joined the crowd at the well, and assisted in getting ready the ropes and other tackle to be used.

[312] The cistern, constructed after the usual Roman pattern, was about forty feet deep, fifteen feet in diameter for the first twenty feet or so, and from there narrowed down to six or seven feet, with footholes cut in the side for the last half. One of Ali's relatives had agreed to be let down with ropes and to start cleaning out the mud and sand from the bottom. However, when the rope had been tied round his middle, and he was just going to be swung in mid-air and lowered to the ledge at half-way, his nerve suddenly failed him, and he refused to start.

Subsequent evidence was confused at this point as to exactly what happened; but it seems that one of the crowd noticed Ahmed standing with the rest, and remarked that he had had considerable experience in well digging, and suggested that he should go down. Accordingly Ahmed flung a stone down the well, and a faint splash at the bottom indicated that there were a few inches of water in it. He then organised a sort of tug-of-war among the men standing by, to test the strength of the rope. Satisfied on this point, he had the rope tied round him, and he was

9: Murray E, K-3, 4 (ca. 1910-1935) 1935 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Egypt

619 oppression, he gathered his people and delivered a fiery
195 denunciation of his religion, during which he smashed his
726 rosary into pieces and mixed it with his horse's fodder;
792 Baqush then invited their kinsmen (?) the Awlad 'Ali, to come over from the "Green Mountain" and help them. To entice the Awlad 'Ali, he is said to have sent them samples of salt desert water and Nile water sweetened with sugar to illustrate the difference between the hardships of the desert and the comforts of the Rif.[1]

619 As recounted earlier, the Awlad 'Ali completely routed the
195 Hanadi and their allies, and drove them from the desert.
726 In the division of the conquered territory, the Jumei'at received a third, and, although they were still considered
[13] Murabitin, were released from the payment of tribute. They now live intermingled with the free sections of the Awlad 'Ali, all along the north coast of Egypt, and are numerous in Beheira, especially near Abu Hummus.

619 *Samalus.*—The Samalus are found scattered among the
[13] Awlad 'Ali on the northern coast and stranded among many of the Egyptian provinces. They once possessed a head sheikh Abu Sala at Minya, and colonies are recorded from Faiyum, Beheira, Menufiya, Gharbiya, and Sharqiya. An
[195] old paper from the Recruiting Department gives from
[162] seventeen villages in the Faiyum 775 mounted Samalus
[23] and 1,400 on foot, possessing 1,760 camels and 11,400 sheep. Two important groups of wells, both called "Sawani
[312] es-Samalus" exist on the north coast, one about 50 kilometres east of Salum, and the other 20 kilometres south of Dhab'a.

[173] They say they came to Egypt, 400 strong, about 200 years ago, from the Wadi Samalus in the Jebel Akhdar, and their ancestor twelve generations ago was Nasr el-Hasani, of course an "Arab from Beni Suleim".

[195] In the *Description de l'Egypte*, P. D. Martin relates how
[726] in 1800 the Samalus of Faiyum were raided by a party of Ferjan, 200 strong, from Beheira.

619 *Shiheibat.*—These are a "Mrabit" tribe from the west with
186 an unenviable reputation, living near the Wadi Natrun. Sayed Idris, the former Senussi leader, says of them: "Most

[1] Dumreicher, 16. This is probably the "Sheik Abdall Gawyal Bagooshi" who wrote to Sir Sydney Smith in March, 1801, warning him of the approach of the French from Damanhur. Wilson, *History of the British Expedition in Egypt*, 371. (Rif = cultivated area.)